

(1) taxpayer money should not be used to proselytize; (2) taxpayer money should not be used to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation; and (3) the independence and autonomy of our religious institutions should not be threatened.

Unfortunately, H.R. 7 in its current form does not prevent the problems I have outlined. Most significantly, while it may state that government funds should not be used for worship or proselytization, meaningful safeguards to prevent such action are not included in the provisions. Further, religious institutions are currently exempted from the ban on religious discrimination in employment provided under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As such, because the bill does not include a repeal of this exemption, these institutions can engage in government-funded employment discrimination.

I am committed to our U.S. Constitution and civil rights statutes. Unfortunately, H.R. 7 threatens these very principles and I believe it is unnecessary and unconstitutional. It is important to note that under current law, religious entities can seek government funding by establishing 501(c)(3) affiliate organizations.

I look forward to working with faith-based entities in their good works, but will also remain a strong advocate of civil rights, religious tolerance and the independence of our religious institutions. Join me in opposing H.R. 7 and supporting the Democratic substitute that will address these serious issues.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7, the Community Solutions Act, which is also known as the Faith-Based Initiative.

America has long been a country made up of generous people who want to help a neighbor in need. Long before government programs came along to act as an extra safety net, individuals worked together with their churches and other community groups to ensure those in need were housed, clothed, and fed.

While government programs were created to provide specific services to needy populations, these programs have less incentive to go above and beyond the call of duty.

For many people of faith who run social service programs, their faith is what inspires them to go the extra mile for the poor, the downtrodden, the hopeless.

Why, then, would the government exclude faith-based providers in its attempt to tackle difficult social problems such as drug addiction, gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness, and homelessness?

Faith-based organizations with effective programs to combat societal ills should be able to compete equally with their non-faith based counterparts for government grants.

And in some cases under current "charitable choice" laws, they can. When Welfare Reform passed in 1996, charitable choice language was included so faith-based groups providing welfare-to-work programs such as job training and child care can compete equally.

I'm sure most of us know a church day care program which could care for children with just as much love and ability and professionalism as a non-faith based program.

The legislation before us today allows "charitable choice" to apply to more government programs, such as juvenile delinquency, housing, domestic violence, job training, and community development programs.

Let me make one thing clear: no faith-based group is compelled to apply. Those who are not interested in government funding can carry on with their ministry and keep doing the good work of serving our nation.

Those groups which have an effective program and would like to compete for a grant may do so and keep their faith-based component largely intact. They would have to abide by some common sense requirements such as keeping the government funds in a separate account, but the requirements should not interfere with the religious nature of their program.

The religious organization sponsoring the program would remain completely autonomous from federal, state, and local government control.

The Faith-Based Initiative is a long-overdue, much-needed reform to recognize the importance of the faith community in caring for the most vulnerable of our nation.

I want to take a minute to highlight a couple of wonderful community initiatives in my District which are inspirational to me. The Downtown Rescue Mission in Spartanburg has a myriad of exciting initiatives to provide housing, meals, health services, job training, and other help to give a helping hand up and empower folks in the downtown area.

And in Greenville, since 1937—during the Great Depression—Miracle Hill Ministries has provided leadership in our community by providing food, clothing, shelter, and compassion to hurting and needy people, as well as serving as a model for other homeless outreach efforts in South Carolina.

I am proud of these folks and the good work that they do and hope that the Faith-Based Initiative would be helpful to them. There are countless other good people and good organizations—big and small—which could benefit from this attempt to provide a level playing field for the faith community.

This bill also contains some great provisions to encourage charitable giving by individuals and corporations, as well as incentives for low-income individuals to save money that can be used to buy a home, a college education, or start a small business.

We want everyone in America to be able to live the American Dream.

The armies of compassion in our nation should be able to serve the needy and provide them hope, so that they too—through hard work and perseverance—can make the American Dream a reality.

Mr. GARY MILLER OF California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7 the "Community Solutions Act."

Although a lot of speakers have focused their remarks on the charitable choice provisions of this bill, I feel that Title III, the Individual Development Account or IDAs offers a fundamental policy shift which merits the attention of this House.

Many communities are facing an affordable housing crisis. Until now, our solution to this problem has been to increase the number of available Section 8 vouchers. However, this "solution" has only widened the gap between those who dream of owning a home, and those who are able to accumulate the financial resources needed to become a first-time home buyer. Under the Section 8 voucher program, if you demonstrate ambition and work hard to improve your situation, you are no longer eligible for the voucher. But at the same time, you do not have the down payment to own a home.

IDAs will begin to reverse this trend. By encouraging individuals to save for a home through tax exemption IDAs and matching that investment, we finally have policy which makes sense.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and to turn the American dream of owning a home into a reality.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE OFFERED BY MR. RANGEL

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

Amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in House Report 107-144 offered by Mr. RANGEL:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Community Solutions Act of 2001".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—CHARITABLE GIVING INCENTIVES PACKAGE

Sec. 101. Deduction for portion of charitable contributions to be allowed to individuals who do not itemize deductions.

Sec. 102. Tax-free distributions from individual retirement accounts for charitable purposes.

Sec. 103. Increase in cap on corporate charitable contributions.

Sec. 104. Charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory.

Sec. 105. Reform of excise tax on net investment income of private foundations.

Sec. 106. Excise tax on unrelated business taxable income of charitable remainder trusts.

Sec. 107. Expansion of charitable contribution allowed for scientific property used for research and for computer technology and equipment used for educational purposes.

Sec. 108. Adjustment to basis of S corporation stock for certain charitable contributions.

Sec. 109. Revenue offset.

TITLE II—EXPANSION OF CHARITABLE CHOICE

Sec. 201. Provision of assistance under government programs by religious and community organizations.

TITLE III—INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS

Sec. 301. Additional qualified entities eligible to conduct projects under the Assets for Independence Act.

Sec. 302. Increase in limitation on net worth.

Sec. 303. Change in limitation on deposits for an individual.

Sec. 304. Elimination of limitation on deposits for a household.

Sec. 305. Extension of program.

Sec. 306. Conforming amendments.

Sec. 307. Applicability.